

# FABIAN QUARTERLY

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No 40 JANUARY 1944

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LONDON:  
FABIAN PUBLICATIONS LTD.  
11, Dartmouth Street, London, S.W.1

## BOOK REVIEWS

### General

**REFLECTIONS ON THE REVOLUTION OF OUR TIME.** By H. J. Laski (Allen & Unwin 15/-)

This should be read by all who take a serious interest in politics. As in his 'Parliamentary Government in England' Laski shows an enormous knowledge of British institutions and trends, but the same strain of defeatism runs through it. When the main political parties differ upon fundamentals, there is a danger that parliamentary democracy may not work. How, therefore, can we pass peacefully to socialism, if we do not achieve it in a wartime period of national unity?

As the latter is improbable, his analysis is not very helpful. He underestimates strength of the democratic tradition in certain sections of the Tory party and ignores the tendency of the young Tories to accept public ownership where monopolies appear inevitable, yet dangerous to public interests. He also seems to ignore the probable influences of big continental changes upon this country. Laski does well to point out the dangers in the political situation today. But we would welcome more suggestions as to methods of dealing with them.

J. P.

**TVA—ADVENTURE IN PLANNING** Julian Huxley (Architectural Press 8/6)

**THE TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY: A Study in Public Administration** C. Herman Pritchett (University of N. Carolina Press \$3.50)

Huxley's book is fascinating reading—and, as all short adventure stories should do, makes us wish for much more information. The Study by the American Professor does tell us more about administrative and personnel problems; the author is clearly one of the specially selected young civil servants recruited by the T V A, to whom so much of its success is owed.

Huxley's book is especially interesting in showing how 'rehabilitation for democracy' (to coin a slogan) can take the people into real partnership. A citizen must be induced to desire that his institutions and, still more, his way of everyday life, are functionally fitted to modern conditions. This short volume is required reading for all who speak about 'functional democracy'. Perhaps the T V A is slightly idealised, but this is no fault in the story of an 'adventure in planning' intended to stimulate. The illustrations are admirable, especially those of architecture. But why rewrite the text in lengthy captions? O. G.

**FAITH AND WORKS** by Lionel Curtis (Oxford University Press 2/-)

'Faith and Works,' the result of further research along the lines of Decision and Action, says something new about sovereignty—misunderstood as much by its detractors as by its defenders—and on the division of power into national and international functions. The British Commonwealth, to make its full contribution to the permanent unity of the sanguinely-named 'United' Nations, must have a popularly elected parliament for common affairs; not exclusively British but a nucleus developing into world government.

H. S. B.

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**NOTE**—Exigencies of wartime publishing compel us to reduce the size of the type used in our publications. The amount of matter has, however, not been cut and we trust that members will still find articles and pamphlets easy to read and not unpleasing to the eye.

By decision of the Executive, the price of the Quarterly is raised to 1/- per copy.

Articles and Reviews in the Quarterly represent not the collective view of the Society but only the view of the author. The responsibility of the Fabian Society is limited to approving the publications which it issues as embodying facts and opinions worthy of consideration within the Labour Movement. It is the aim of the Society to encourage among Socialists a high standard of free and independent research.

# POINTS FOR PLANNERS

**PAY AS YOU EARN.** "A New System for the Taxation of the Weekly Wage Earner." (H.M. Stationery Office. 2d.)

The present Income Tax system under which wage earners have tax deducted from their pay ten months after the receipt of the income on which the tax is levied, has obvious disadvantages. The computation of the tax deduction becomes quite incomprehensible to the average man, and inconvenience and hardship is caused for many. In particular, those who suffer a fall in income during the period intervening between the receipt of the earnings and the deduction of the tax are placed at a grave disadvantage. The difficulties from this cause would have become immense at the close of the war when vast numbers of munition workers are almost certain to undergo considerable reductions in wages.

In these circumstances the Government has seen fit, as from April next, to introduce changes whereby tax will be deducted each week in respect of the wages earned during that week. The new scheme has been well received and in the debate in the Commons members of all parties expressed their satisfaction. In fact, they insisted that the scheme should be extended to all salary and wage earners, regardless of the level of income, and the Government has wisely accepted the suggestion.

The new scheme is outlined in a 2d. pamphlet issued by the Stationery Office, although since its publication certain administrative changes have been announced, and, no doubt, others will follow. The essence of the scheme is that tax payers are divided into categories according to the allowances (for wife, children, etc.) to which they are entitled, and each category is characterised by a code number. The Inland Revenue authorities will draw up and issue to employers tax tables from which it will be easy to ascertain week by week the cumulative total of tax corresponding to the cumulative total of wages of any employee. The actual amount of tax to be deducted for each week will then be easily calculable. By working with the tax table for the appropriate code number tax allowances will automatically be taken into account, as will the earned income allowance. An incidental result of the cumulative method of computation will be that when a man resumes work after an interruption of earnings, he will begin by paying tax at a reduced rate, or possibly may receive a cash refund. This, at a time when finances may have been strained by illness, etc., is an excellent arrangement.

It has been said in some quarters that the scheme will be administratively cumbersome. Actuaries have suggested that the tax tables, which will be a substantial volume, might be considerably simplified. Employers have complained, not altogether without justification, of the burden of work to be placed on their office staffs, for a card supplied by the Inland Revenue for every employee will have to be entered up each week. However, allowing for all such imperfections the scheme is a great step forward in simplifying and easing the whole business of tax assessment and collection, and is to be welcomed as such. Incidentally, if in the long run it helps to reconcile wage earners to direct, *vis a vis* indirect, taxation, it may have effects on tax policy which will be beneficial to the working class.

**A REPORT ON MUTUAL AID.** (Cmd. 6483. H.M. Stationery Office. 2d.)

This report is a timely reminder of the scope of the inter-Allied pooling of resources which has developed since the inception of Lend-Lease in March 1941. Too frequently we think merely of the flow of supplies from America to this country and from America and Britain to Russia. The pamphlet makes clear the extent to which Britain has made reciprocal contributions to America in the form of varied services and supplies, very largely for the American forces serving in this country. It also emphasises the very considerable part played by the Dominions. Some attempt is made to detail the British contribution, and statistical information is given. We are told that in all some 10% of our total war expenditure is for Mutual Aid, while 12% of the war expenditure of the U.S.A. has been applied to Lend-Lease. The pertinent comment is added, however, that much which has been contributed to the common pool by ourselves and our Allies is excluded from the figures quoted. First, because intangible contributions such as experience, research and information cannot readily be measured in terms of price. Secondly, because in some theatres of war where American and British forces are in action together, their material resources are so interwoven that it has so far been impossible to put value terms on the supplies, etc., contributed by each participant. A necessary word of warning reminds us that a country's War Effort cannot be assessed by the size of its contribution to the allied common pool; for it is in the nature of the economic, geographic and military situation that some nations, the U.S.A. in particular, should be able to throw in resources on a more lavish scale than some other members of the family of United Nations.

D. R. D.

**RIVER BOARDS.** Third Report of the Central Advisory Water Committee.  
(Cmd. 6495. H M Stationery Office. 1943. 1/3.)

A river may at present have different authorities for land drainage, navigation, fisheries, prevention of pollution and water supply. A body, such as the Thames Conservancy, on the other hand, deals with all these matters and it does indeed seem obvious that the catchment area of each river should be dealt with by one authority only for all purposes concerning that river alone.

This report contains a programme for reconstruction of river authorities and recommends the setting up of river boards and a central advisory water committee functioning both in an advisory capacity and as a general co-ordinating authority.

The Committee give an appendix of recommendations on rivers which have been made by Government Committees as far back as 1866. Some 13 reports have recommended the establishment of river boards and it is depressing to think how these recommendations have been ignored for the last 77 years. One hopes that public representatives will not allow this report to be forgotten. There is a very useful map attached to the report showing the proposed river board areas.

R. S. W. P.

# THE CO-OPERATIVE BALANCE SHEET

(1844-1944)

N. Barou, Ph.D. (Econ.) London

## A HUNDRED YEARS BACK

This year the Labour Movement is celebrating a small, but epoch-making event which happened in Rochdale one hundred years ago. Like many other Lancashire manufacturing towns, Rochdale, in 1844, was passing through a bitter crisis. The weaving industry was in a bad way and its workers faced unemployment and poverty. Large numbers of them were reduced to starvation level, and their standard of living was further lowered by unsuccessful industrial struggle. Insecurity continually threatened the Rochdale workers. As they had little means to improve their wages, it was natural that they should try to make the best use of the meagre resources at their disposal. For them, economy in spending was the line of least resistance in the social struggle, and they took it wholeheartedly by forming a consumers' cooperative society.

William King, writing in the '20's of the last century, laid down the principles of voluntary cooperation with clarity and simplicity in the following words: 'We must form ourselves into a society for this special purpose, we must form a fund by weekly deposits. As soon as it has achieved enough we must lay it out in various commodities, which we must place in a common store, from which all members must purchase their common necessities, and the profit will form a common capital to be again laid out in the commodities most wanted. Thus, we shall have two sources of accumulation, the weekly subscription, and the profits on articles sold.'

King's teaching, distributed through his magazine *The Cooperator*, served as a guide to the group of weavers who, in 1844, established the 'Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers'. But they went a step further by deciding to divide any trading surpluses among the members of the Society in proportion to the purchases of each. The 'dividend' principle was not altogether new, but its adoption at this point helped to convert the groups of co-operative pioneers into the mighty movement which now embraces millions of people in every country of the world. It fostered a new means of day-to-day saving and provided the housewife, struggling under the weight of a semi-starvation budget, with a new chance to assert herself. Small wonder that the woman with the basket became an enthusiastic supporter of consumers' cooperation.

Though they suffered in common with other cooperators of these early days from a lack of education, the Rochdale pioneers started very early to combat this deficiency. They learned from William King to see beyond the economic aspects of cooperative effort. 'When a man enters a cooperative society', wrote King, 'he enters upon a new relation with his fellow-men, and that relation becomes immediately a subject of further sanction, both

moral and religious.' In 1852 it was decided to allocate 2½% of the trading surpluses to educational projects, and this decision was embodied in the rules of the Society. This step paved the way for educational development of great value to thousands of keen cooperators.

Despite their interest in education, the Pioneers did not bind themselves to any express political view. They supported Robert Owen's resolution, approved at the London Congress of Cooperative Societies in 1832, which declared: 'Whereas the cooperative world contains persons of every religious sect, and of every political party, it is resolved that cooperators, as *such*, jointly and severally, are not pledged to any political, religious, or irreligious tenets whatsoever.' This affirmation of political and religious neutrality was a sign of the helpless position in which the working man, still without parliamentary franchise, found himself in those days, but it has established a firm tradition and its influence is still felt in the cooperative movement of our day.

## WORLD CO-OPERATION IN RETROSPECT

The Rochdale Pioneers initiated successful cooperation amongst consumers. But the foundations of agricultural and producers' cooperation may be attributed to the Raiffeisen and Schultze Delitsch Societies in Germany. The two movements, with their many variations, produced between them the essential programme and structural framework of 19th century international cooperation. In recent years the USA with its Credit Union Movement, and the Soviet Union with its collective farms, have made the two biggest contributions to cooperative thought and practice.

Why has the cooperative movement been so successful? Because its economic and social functions are well fitted to serve the interests of the wage-earners, farmers and artisans. Cooperation is a popular movement against exploitation which arises in capitalist society as a result of private ownership in land and in the means of production and exchange. Exploitation shows itself chiefly in the operation of the market price mechanism with human labour as one of its main commodities. The individual consumer is powerless to protect his interests against the forces which dominate the market, but cooperative societies unite a multitude of consumers and endeavour to use the market price mechanism for the benefit of their own members. Trade Unions, by combining wage earners whose labour is sold as a special commodity, perform similar functions in the labour market.

Two main social groups are interested in cooperative organisation—wage earners and small rural and urban producers. They approach it in two different capacities; as consumers of goods and services and as suppliers of labour. Both groups are equally interested in consumers' cooperation, being badly exploited as consumers by the capitalist method of distributing goods and services. They try, therefore, to protect themselves by creating consumers' cooperatives (shops, restaurants, laundries, travelling agencies and, in some areas, telephone, electricity and other services), and by establishing cooperative banks, credit unions and cooperative insurance societies.

The approach of wage earners and small producers to cooperation differs considerably, as the labour of their members is being utilised differently. The wage earner has no enterprise of his own: he is dependent on his wages and has established cooperative societies to make better use of his earnings. His household is only a consuming and not a producing unit and for him co-operation offers a collective supply of goods and services. The wage earner produces nothing independently. But sometimes he has united in co-operative productive societies, in which each is a working member. This is, however, less common in urban than in rural communities.

The small producer's household economy is the main source of his income

and he is primarily, if not solely, interested in developing it as a productive enterprise. The small producer treats his household primarily as a productive unit and endeavours to increase with help from cooperatives the productive capacity of his individual enterprise. The cooperative organisation plays only a supplementary part in his economic activities.

Small agricultural producers or small artisans and craftsmen establish purchasing and marketing cooperative societies in order to protect themselves from middlemen and traders. They use cooperative marketing organisations to sell collectively the products of their farms and employ the cooperative purchasing organisation for the collective buying of consumers' and capital goods needed for their household and productive activities. Agricultural cooperation has shown itself to be, however, more than a mere defensive force. It has proved itself able to handle well a host of agricultural enterprises and rural services in which capitalism has often not proved itself a success (such as rural credit and insurance, water supply, rural electricity and telephones). The existence of voluntary management, the organisation of rural societies, the low ratio of running expenses to total expenses, the mutual confidence existing amongst the members, all these have created a basis for successful rural cooperation in such fields as are abandoned or left untouched by profit-making enterprise.

Cooperation serves, therefore, not only as a defence movement against capitalist exploitation, but also as a new creative type of progressive economic organisation, which is able to deal with the most difficult spheres of rural economy.

### THE SIZE OF THE MOVEMENT

Cooperative ideas and effort have produced the largest organised voluntary movement in the world: according to the information published by the International Labour Office in 1939, there were 458,000 societies with 73 million members all over the world outside the U.S.S.R. If one adds to this figure the 290,000 Soviet Cooperative societies with over 80 million members, the total cooperative membership of the world amounts to over 150 millions.

In Europe the membership was distributed as follows: There were 20,000 consumers' societies with 19 million members outside the U.S.S.R., and 28,000 societies with 36 million members in the U.S.S.R. Housing societies amounted to 11,000 in number and had 3 million members: 20,000 artisans', traders' and productive societies of workers with 5 million members existed outside the U.S.S.R., and 20,000 handicraft societies with 1,800,000 members within the U.S.S.R. Finally, we had 188,000 agricultural societies (including credit societies) with 22 million members outside the U.S.S.R., and 245,000 collective farms with over 40 million members in the U.S.S.R.

Although agricultural cooperation has very little influence in this country, it is more widely spread than the consumers' movement over the world in general. In many agricultural countries, such as Denmark, Finland, and Hungary, consumers' societies often act as supply organisations for the farmers, or collect and market agricultural produce from those of their members who are farmers. In those countries, and in the U.S.A. and Canada, farmers form the great majority of cooperative membership. But even in highly industrialised countries, where the majority is derived from industrial workers, the agricultural population is well represented. Thus in Sweden, where 50% of the members are industrial workers, 20% derive their income from agriculture; in Norway 52% were once in industry, transport or fishing, and 26% were farmers, 6% foresters and farm labourers, and 12% clerical workers. In the Finnish cooperative movement, 64% of the members are agriculturists, 25% clerical workers and officials, and 12% industrial workers. In Poland before

1939 peasants represented 44% of the membership, industrial workers 31% and clerical workers 10%.

One of the main original tasks set by the Rochdale Pioneers was to employ their members in cooperative enterprise. Their book of rules referred to such employment in paragraphs 3, 4 and 5. Modern practice has not confirmed the hopes of those early days. The proportion of members actually employed by cooperative organisations all over the world is only about two per hundred members. The British Cooperative Movement, employing in 1941 over 337,000 people, or 4% of its membership total, has the highest percentage in the whole world.

## BRITISH CO-OPERATION TODAY

When one looks back to the establishment of the Rochdale Society, it seems strange to find that we are already celebrating the first centenary of its formation. Both men and ideas have changed considerably during this century and the Rochdale principles which have proved their worth during the troubled years of the nineteenth century are now applied in a greatly changed world.

What are the chief social and economic changes which the cooperators must take into consideration in modern capitalist society? The first is urbanisation. More than half of the population of this country lives in fourteen towns, and this concentration has led to the growth of colossal cooperative societies which count their membership in hundreds of thousands. At the end of 1941 six societies in this country had a membership of over 100,000 each and 1,776,996 all told. Another 24 societies had a membership of over 50,000 each, totalling 1,644,648. Two out of every five cooperators in this country are members of these 30 societies. There are about 600 smaller societies with a membership under 3,000 each and 713,180 in all. These giant societies have created new problems of management and organisation which have not yet been successfully solved. The local direct representation of old times has given way to a complicated machine of indirect representation which works badly: only a very small proportion, not more than 1% or 2% of the membership of the colossal urban societies, takes an active part in the election of managerial bodies or a live interest in the affairs of the societies.

Urbanisation has resulted not only in the formation of big societies. It has changed the whole character of cooperative activities. In the old days a man worked and lived in the same locality: a considerable part of the working population in large urban centres now lives between five and seven miles from the place of employment. These people have at present two centres—their home and their place of employment—and their life and interests are divided between the two of them. This division has a considerable effect on their feeding arrangements and the use of their leisure time, and it has considerably influenced and modified the problems which the cooperative movement has to face nowadays. For the home has ceased to be the only hub in the personal economy of many millions of wage-earners, and cooperative organisations established entirely on a geographical and local basis have to face up to the new functional organisation of modern industrial society and have to adjust their own mechanism and structure to it. Cooperative restaurants and credit unions illustrate the new approach which is emerging; their function is to bring cooperative services to members in their places of employment.

Modern industrial developments have also had a great influence on the position of women in the cooperative movement. Nowadays industry and politics are open to women; and communal feeding centres, canteens and British restaurants offer them opportunities to spend less and less time in the household and in the kitchen. The cooperative movement will have to take stock of the changed position of its main supporters and promoters.

For all this, however, the cooperative movement still provides a very attractive form of popular saving, and is the only branch of the working-class movement which during the last twenty-five years has shown no break in the constant increase in its membership. This membership has risen from 3,846,531 in 1918 to 8,924,068 in 1942. Though the dividend paid by the cooperative societies in 1942 amounted to an average of only 2/1 in the £ on sales (the highest regional average being 2/8½ in the Scottish section, and the lowest 1/7½ in the Southern section), this dividend does not seem to lose its attraction for members. The average turnover per member amounted for the year 1942 to £35.79 (the highest being £53.92 in the Scottish section, and the lowest £27.07 in the Southern section). An average of 13/9, therefore, was spent per member per week. The usual annual dividend varied between £3 and £7 and, in so far as it was in itself attractive, reflected upon the low level of working-class earnings before the outbreak of the war. Our own investigations in 1930 have shown that only one quarter of the membership of the consumers' societies could afford to accumulate their savings, and the great majority had to spend them in order to bridge the gaps in their meagre budgets. Thus, although the average share-holding per member stood in 1928 at about £16, 37% of the membership held no more than £1, and 71% no more than £3 apiece, while only 12% of the members held between £25 and £200.<sup>1</sup>

The turnover of the two great Cooperative Wholesale Societies covers over 60% of retail cooperative trade. It amounted in 1941 to £302,246,329. The English CWS in 1942 had among its Shareholders' Societies a membership of 7,309,579; its net sales for the year amounted to £144,307,408 and its productive output to £47,098,301. The Scottish CWS has 999,093 members, with £32,149,921 net sales and £9,816,972 productive output. The combined assets of the movement reached in 1941 nearly half a milliard sterling (£488,133,376) in which the Funds of the CWS Bank and the Cooperative Insurance Society played a very great part.

The cooperative movement in this country remains predominantly a food supply movement. This is easy to understand, because food accounts for about half of the weekly expenditure of a working-class family. The cooperative movement now handles about 10% of the total retail trade of the country, about 12% of the total trade in food and tobacco and about 20% of the coal trade. Its share in the drapery and clothing trades amounts, however, to only about 6%, and in the hardware and furnishing trades amount to an even smaller figure.

But while the 'coop.' distributes 12% of the total food and allied trades supplies, the proportion of its trade in some commodities is much higher. In July 1942 the following proportions of the estimated civil population registered with cooperative societies for various rationed goods:

Sugar and preserves	..	..	..	27%
Butter, margarine and cooking fat	..	..	..	26%
Cheese	..	..	..	26%
Bacon	..	..	..	24%
Eggs	..	..	..	24%
Milk	..	..	..	18%
Meat	..	..	..	14.5%

The limitations of cooperative trade are partly a result of the comparatively small number of cooperative trading units, which are estimated to be about 27,000, i.e. only 4½% of all trading units in this country. They are, however, partly a result of specialisation by the cooperative movement in food production and distribution at the expense of other commodities and of the organisation of services. In this respect it differs from the consumers' movement in the U.S.A. and other countries.

<sup>1</sup> See N. Barou, *Cooperative Banking*, p. 35.

## CO-OPERATION AND POLITICS

The new part played by the State in economic life has greatly affected the attitude of cooperators to politics and to the State itself. The modern industrial State is not satisfied to remain an arbiter between Capital and Labour, but is taking a direct and ever-increasing part in the organisation of the economic and industrial life of the nation. Even before the outbreak of war, the State by budgetary measures, by taxation, by control of foreign trade, and by direct participation in industrial life, was exercising an ever-increasing influence on the development of our national economy. But the capitalist State was to a very great extent the creation of political parties representing the interests of the owning classes. It is no coincidence that in the House of Commons elected in 1924, 1929, 1931 and 1935 there were respectively 177, 121, 165 and 145 M P's belonging to the Conservative Party who at the same time were directors of leading capitalist companies. The cooperative movement all the time felt the increasing interference of the State in its own activities and daily proceedings, and it had to protect itself by changing its attitude from political neutrality to actual participation in political life. Although cooperators are free to follow their own political inclination, the membership as a whole has naturally given its support to the Labour movement and helped to build the Labour vote. Yet in the Labour programme, published in March 1937, the Cooperative movement is only mentioned in the following lines: 'By a full use of Cooperative undertakings and marketing Boards the present wide gap between what the producer receives and what the consumer pays will be narrowed'.<sup>1</sup>

Within the Labour movement, cooperators have created their own Co-operative Party, which has grown more rapidly than any other organisation in the country. In 1924, 393 societies with a membership of 1,835,671 were affiliated to the Cooperative Party. The corresponding figures for 1942 were 598 societies with 6,775,443 members, representing nearly 80% of the whole cooperative membership of the country. The Cooperative Party rests on the affiliation of societies, and it is characteristic that of the 29 societies with a membership of 50,000 and more 25 are affiliated to the Party; they contain nearly 95% of the total membership of the 29 societies. However, only a small proportion of members are normally active, and the Party is not nearly as strong compared with the Labour Party as its paper membership suggests.

It is essential that those aiming to establish a planned democratic economy should understand the position of the cooperative movement under capitalism, should know as much as possible about the difficulties and dangers they have to face during the transition period to Socialism and should visualise the organisation and working of the system by which they intend to replace capitalism. In this respect we must remember that the interests of component organisations of the National Council of Labour are complementary and not contradictory. The present field of collaboration between the three is severely restricted and should be rapidly expanded. It must be emphasised that in the National Council of Labour there is already in existence machinery for full collaboration between the three branches of the movement and for the creation of an effective United Labour force. The authority and jurisdiction of the National Council of Labour must be increased and a real effort made by the Labour and Cooperative Parties and by the Trade Union Congress to evolve a common political platform for detailed propaganda and enrolment

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<sup>1</sup> It is, however, encouraging to read the following statement of Reconstruction Policy adopted this year by the Annual Conference of the Labour Party (June, 1943): "An increasing part in our trade organisation is being and should be played by the Consumers' Co-operative Movement. Co-operation renders great service to millions of the people in the distributive sphere and its principles are capable of increasing application in the field of agriculture."

of members and for mass political education. Furthermore, the research and fact-finding activities of all three branches of the movement, which are very restricted and uncoordinated, should be considerably enlarged and fully supervised centrally by the creation of a Labour Research Council operating under the auspices of the National Council of Labour.

## CONCLUSIONS

The experience of cooperation during the past century contains within it a number of lessons and pointers towards the future. The author feels that the following observations are particularly relevant.

(1) In years to come cooperators will have to revise their attitude to the State and to stress their legitimate claim to an appropriate representation of their interests in any new economic institution created by the State.

(2) There is no longer any room for political neutrality in the cooperative movement, though its societies must remain open to people of different political opinions. The capitalists are no longer satisfied with the mere growth of national and international monopolies in all sections of economic life. The cooperative movement must clearly formulate its political demands and determine the place of its organisation and methods in any type of planned economy. It is essential to achieve a full understanding of the principles upon which labour is to be divided between State, municipal, cooperative and trade union organisations in the transition period from State capitalism to a democratically planned economy.

(3) The cooperative movement may undertake beneficial changes in its own organisation. Stronger cohesion should be established between its various branches, especially between consumer and agricultural cooperation. Moreover, each branch of the movement should have the support and collaboration of all other branches in its trading and other activities.

(4) The experience of agricultural cooperatives throughout the world shows that no progressive economic principles can be applied in rural districts without a strong and well-developed cooperative movement. We must recognise the fact that rural cooperation offers the best, quickest and cheapest method of organising the rural population in backward and colonial countries.

(5) From the growth of large, urban, distributive societies, it is evident that a great deal of research must be undertaken and proposals made in consequence (a) to adjust the size of cooperative societies with a view to obtaining optimum and uniform efficiency, and (b) to preserve the democratic organisation and supervision by members which has been an essential characteristic of the movement during its century of growth.

(6) In respect of the new economic and social habits of members, the movement must realise the increasing importance of functional, cooperative organisation. The experience of other countries, e.g. the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., shows that the new needs of consumers discussed earlier in this article can be met by new cooperative institutions working at or near places of employment; by credit unions, supplying the necessary credit for everyday needs, including season tickets for daily travel; by cooperative cafeterias; and by credit unions which handle industrial assurance and collect money contributions inside the factories. Factory cooperation should be considered as a possible step to be taken at this juncture.

(7) The new social and political conditions make it imperative for the cooperative movement to provide for a wider training of its business leaders, and to create a general staff of its own. For example, it needs technicians, accountants, economists, statisticians and educationalists, and it must spare

little effort or expense to build up these supplies of qualified servants in the shortest possible time. This aim can only be achieved if the educationalists in the movement play a leading part in the formation of policy.

(8) The movement needs a permanent research organisation covering all sections of its activities. The Cooperative Union could regard the establishment of such an organisation as one of its most important and urgent tasks, and might look for support for its proposals from every cooperative body in the country.

(9) Lastly, the experience of the U.S.A. and other countries stresses the benefits which the cooperative movement may reap from new methods of mass propaganda and education, especially the cinema and radio. The movement in Britain has sufficient funds at its disposal to tackle this new field with vigour and imagination, and in a much bigger way than it has done in recent years.

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### A FABIAN STUDY

**COMMODITY CONTROL** By P. Lamartine Yates (Jonathan Cape 15/-)

This study of primary products, undertaken by a group of Fabians, analyses the price fluctuations of wheat, sugar, coffee, rubber, tin, copper, and mineral oil in the past and recommends commodity control for the future in a world of expanding consumption rather than restricted output. It suggests that in order to achieve stability for each important commodity in international trade there should be an International Council which should maintain a buffer stock large enough to be used for offsetting any short period fluctuations either in supply, due to crop variations, or in demand due to trade cycle movements. This Council would fix a basic price for the commodity and would undertake to buy (for stock) whenever prices fell and to sell when they rose. Space prevents setting out the whole scheme here but it is a comprehensive plan to end poverty amidst plenty. The Hot Springs Conference recommended that a special international organisation should be created 'to study the feasibility and desirability of commodity arrangements'. *Commodity Control* points the way to how it can be done.

C. W. G.

# THE BUILDING INDUSTRY AFTER THE WAR

## G. D. H. Cole

Before the outbreak of war there were well over a million operatives attached to the building industry, and a third of a million attached to the closely related group of 'public works'. Houses were being built at a rate of approximately 350,000 a year, and approximately £340 millions a year was being spent on building work of all kinds, including a heavy item for the repair and maintenance of existing buildings, but excluding expenditure on roads, aerodromes, and other 'public works' outside the building group proper. For four years the greater part of this normal activity has been suspended, and only building essential for war purposes has been carried out. The number of workers employed in the building industry has been sharply reduced : hardly any apprentices have been trained to fill up the gaps in the ranks of the skilled operatives ; and repairs, as well as new construction, have been postponed wherever this could be done. Over and above this there will be after the war bomb damage to be made good ; but arrears of building will mean much more in terms of post-war demand than the making good of bomb damage—that is, unless we use the opportunity created by this damage to pull down large areas of our existing towns and embark on really extensive re-planning schemes.

### REQUIREMENTS

Before the war, house-building accounted for about 40% of the total building activity, in terms of cost, and repairs and maintenance of all kinds of buildings for about 33%. This left only about 27% for all other buildings, including factories, shops, cinemas, pubs, Government buildings, civic buildings, schools and colleges—in fact, everything except private houses and blocks of flats. The amount of factory and other industrial building was small, largely because we were tolerating a great mass of unemployment instead of setting every available producer to work and also because we were doing little to adapt our industrial structure to the changing requirements of modern economic technique. Actually, in 1938, factory building accounted for only about 7½% of total building activity ; and the largest elements apart from houses were such things as shops and cinemas. There was a fair amount of building of new senior and secondary schools ; but both technical and junior elementary education had been allowed to fall a long way behind.

#### (a) FOR INDUSTRY

Clearly, we shall need after the war to plan for much more industrial building than before. It is true that a good many of the factories erected for war purposes ought to be adaptable to the needs of peace ; but most of them will need very extensive structural changes, and a number will be unusable on account of their underground construction or their unsuitable location, or for other reasons. Much new factory building will be needed in order to adapt our industries to the policy of 'Full Employment' which we are pledged to follow, as well as to changes in manufacturing technique. Moreover, the majority of our existing factories are obsolete by any acceptable modern standard, and a high proportion of them are located where assuredly no factories ought to be allowed—in the middle of congested urban areas, where they are huddled together in such a way as to make impossible either proper lighting and ventilation or the provision of such necessary amenities as decent canteens. We ought to embark on a deliberate policy of moving factories out of the old, heavily built-up areas to places where they can have

reasonable light, air and space. This involves sometimes creating new factory zones attached to existing towns, sometimes establishing new satellite towns with good communications with the older centres, sometimes the development of great war factories into Trading or Industrial Estates in which firms, large or small, can be provided with well-designed up-to-date factories, centrally supplied with power and other services, and equipped with the best facilities for transport to every part of the country.

These things are imperatively needed. Neither the workers nor the public must put up any longer with the grossly inefficient and insanitary conditions under which a large part of our industries have hitherto been carried on. There must be much more stringent laws governing both standards of factory accommodation and the location of industrial enterprises in suitable places, so as to provide the best possible working conditions with the least possible damage to the amenities of town or country. And we shall need not only better factories but also more, if we are to put behind us once and for all the absurdity of having millions out of work while millions more go short even of what is needed for decent living.

### (b) FOR AGRICULTURE

It will, then, be necessary to assign a much larger proportion than before the war of the available building labour to industrial building. In addition, there will be a big demand for new building in connection with agricultural development. How much this will amount to will depend on still unsettled questions of post-war agricultural output in order to relieve the pressure on foreign exchange arising out of food imports and to provide for a better standard of nutrition among the whole people. But even if we were to leave our agricultural production small, and to continue to rely on imports for a high proportion of our food, it would still be necessary to undertake a large amount of agricultural building. Our farms have been starved of capital for many years past, and their buildings, like many of our factories, are largely obsolete. Whatever we do about such things as grain-growing and meat production, we shall certainly need a greatly increased home output of milk, eggs, fruit and fresh vegetables of many kinds ; and to get these produced under efficient and sanitary conditions will call for a large-scale application of capital to the land, including new building on an extensive scale. Over and above this, we stand committed to raising country standards of living and amenity ; and this means much building of new cottages in the rural villages, as well as their equipment with Village Halls, much better schools, and efficient and cheap public utility services—gas, water, transport, and electric power.

### (c) FOR EDUCATION

We are also pledged to a big programme of educational advance. The school-leaving age should advance to sixteen as soon as the necessary new schools can be built and the teachers trained. There should also be part-time Continuation Schools for all up to eighteen and a greatly extended provision of Technical Schools and Colleges and of new Universities and other institutions at which the large number of additional teachers and social workers who will be needed can get efficiently trained. Moreover, apart from these new needs, there are vast arrears of school building to be overtaken. Many of our existing elementary schools are a disgrace : they ought to be replaced by buildings in which teachers will not have to struggle hopelessly against dark, dirty, stuffy, crowded environments, with no proper space for work or play, and a depressing drabness over all that wrecks the chance of making education a joyous preparation for the adventure of life. Some of the new Senior and Secondary Schools built in recent years are excellent ; but the

majority of existing schools are out-of-date, and so are many of our Technical Colleges and other buildings devoted to higher education.

#### (d) FOR HOUSING

The demand for houses will, however, be assuredly the most pressing of all. We are already well over a million houses short of the number that would have been built if activity had continued at the pre-war level ; and there will be, as soon as the forces are demobilised, an insistent demand for new houses. The discomforts under which many people are now living will become intensely irksome ; and housing will at once become one of the most live political issues. There may, indeed, be a tendency among politicians to follow the course of popular demand in such a way as to devote nearly all the available resources of the building industry to house building, and much too little to other things ; and such a tendency might have very bad long-run effects, if it resulted in putting up houses quickly at any price, regardless either of their quality or of their correct location in relation to the future distribution of opportunities for employment or of the requirements of proper town and country planning.

There are some who, conscious of the urgent demand for houses, advocate a general resort to pre-fabrication, in order to reduce the need for skilled labour to a minimum and to ensure the quickest possible construction. Sometimes it is urged that a large place should be given to temporary structures, designed to fill the immediate gap, and then to be replaced by more permanent dwellings. Both these projects are open to grave objection, unless they are carefully safeguarded. There is a place for pre-fabrication ; and there is much to be gained by the mass-production (largely in disused war factories) of such forms of equipment as standardised plumbing requisites, woodwork and plastic structures and decorations, and perhaps timber substitutes in order to meet the shortage of seasoned timber. But the Trade Unions are right to be suspicious of proposals to dispense with the work of the bricklayer in the greater part of the post-war housing arrangements. By all means let us experiment with pre-fabricated dwellings, under proper safeguards ; but let us not suppose that there has yet been found any satisfactory substitute for brickwork as an essential of most forms of house building.

Proposals for the erection of temporary dwellings should also be closely scrutinised. The danger is that, even if such buildings are designed for no more than temporary use, it may be exceedingly difficult to get rid of them when they have once been inhabited. There is a case for putting up temporary dwellings to meet the special difficulty which will arise when populations transferred during the war return to areas which have been heavily blitzed ; for how else are the returning families to be housed ? But there will have to be stringent safeguards for the removal of these temporary structures as fast as proper houses can be built ; and the right course will be to erect them, wherever possible, on sites which are scheduled for preservation as open spaces or parks or for development for purposes other than housing. What must not happen is the erection of temporary dwellings on land scheduled for permanent housing ; for if that is allowed the problem of evicting the inhabitants will become insoluble. They will resist going until other houses are available ; but it will be impossible to begin building the permanent houses till the temporary dwellings have been removed.

Temporary housing should be resorted to only in exceptional cases—in heavily damaged areas or occasionally in the neighbourhood of war factories which are being converted into permanent satellite towns or Industrial Estates. If, however, we are to avoid a large-scale resort to either temporary structures or prefabricated dwellings of a low standard, we shall have to take drastic steps to enlarge the man-power of the building industry in order to enable it to cope simultaneously with this and with other urgent demands.

## THE LABOUR FORCE

The Government, in a recent White Paper, based on a Report prepared by the Central Council of Works and Buildings attached to the Ministry of Works, has announced its intention of taking steps to raise the labour force of the building industry to a million and a quarter within about three years of the end of the war. This means an increase of about 200,000 on the *pre-war* strength of the industry. What matters in this connection is not the total labour force, but the number of skilled workers. Less skilled labour can be easily recruited to any extent required ; but it will not be easy to fill the gaps in the ranks of the craftsmen, caused by death, disablement or retirement, and to find the larger number of craftsmen who will be needed. Apprenticeship has almost ceased under war conditions ; and there will be a grave shortage of young men trained for skilled work. Approximately half the total strength of the building industry in 1939 was made up of skilled craftsmen ; and, though the proportions in the different crafts may change, there is no good reason for supposing that post-war building will require many fewer skilled men in proportion to the total numbers employed.

Accordingly, there will have to be a big emergency scheme for the training of skilled workers, and the great majority of the trainees will have to come from the armed forces or from the industries now making munitions. The Central Council's Report contemplates a scheme of this kind ; and the proposal is accepted in the White Paper, albeit in a weakened form. What is proposed is an intensive course of craft training, lasting normally for six months with provision for further training on the job, and for supplementary courses beyond the six months in Training Centres, where they turn out to be needed.

## WORKING CONDITIONS

A plan of this sort, involving mass-dilution of the building crafts in time of peace, naturally presents serious problems to the building Trade Unions ; and they could not be expected to support it unless they were given very positive assurances. The builders have been heavy sufferers from discontinuous employment, and the percentage of unemployment among them has usually been high even in periods of general trade activity. There has been much seasonal and casual work ; and loss of earnings on account of bad weather ('wet time,' as it is called) has been serious. From the standpoint of man-power the building industry, with its host of separate employers and the essential discontinuity of jobs, has been ill-organised and wasteful. It has been, moreover, very subject to cyclical fluctuations, badly aggravated by the idiocy of public policy. Sensible Governments would be at pains to engage in more building in times of depression, in order to maintain employment ; but Governments in the past have done the very opposite. In the name of 'economy', they have shut down building projects in bad times ; and local authorities, dependent on State assistance for finance, have been prompt to follow their lead.

With this experience in mind—especially in relation to what happened after the last war—the builders' Unions naturally wish to safeguard their members' position before they are willing to undertake the training of a huge body of newcomers who would become their competitors for employment in the event of a slump. The safeguards demanded are of two kinds. They want a firm assurance, first, that the large-scale building policy which is, contemplated immediately after the war will not be reversed a year or two later on the plea that it cannot be afforded ; and, secondly, that there will be no return to the wasteful use of man-power which characterised the industry before the war—or, in other words, they look for a 'guaranteed week' and for some guarantee of continuous employment.

The Report of the Central Council of Works and Buildings fully endorses the first of these demands and gives qualified support to the second. The

Government's White Paper gives qualified support to the first, but dismisses the second as a matter to be dealt with by the industry itself. This is most unsatisfactory. There ought to be no hesitation at all about giving an absolute pledge to maintain a long-term policy of large-scale building for a long time after the war—say, in terms of a twelve or even a twenty years' programme. The need for all the building that the industry will be able to do over such a period is beyond doubt ; and the maintenance of building activity at a high level is the first and most important requisite of the policy of 'Full Employment' which the Government has said it intends to follow. But there are already signs that the Treasury is alarmed at the cost of a long-term building programme, and has hankерings after the bad 'economy' notions of the past. It is therefore necessary for the public to press hard for an unequivocal pledge that building will not merely be started at a high level as soon as the war is over, but will also be kept continuously at a high level in terms of a long-run programme.

This, however, is not enough. The builders have a right to demand that their labour shall be properly used, and that they shall not on account of faulty organisation in the industry be deprived of the chance of earning regularly a decent wage. The right course is so to reorganise the industry as to make it capable of affording continuous employment ; and if this cannot be done under private ownership there is an overwhelming case for converting the industry, or the greater part of it, into a public concern. The greater part of building activity after the war will necessarily be carried on in response to public orders. Housing, which is the largest part, will be mainly a public matter ; for it is most unlikely that there can be a return to the pre-war method of speculative building financed mainly by means of Building Societies and Insurance Companies. That method was never successful in meeting working-class needs : it worked chiefly in supplying houses for the middle-classes and the 'black-coats' ; and even so it was costly, involving high interest charges and throwing heavy burdens on those who bought houses on the instalment plan. By forcing householders to buy houses, when they would mostly much sooner have rented them, it interfered with the mobility of labour, which will be a very important matter in the coming reorganisation of the British economy. Moreover, it worked out most unfairly to the purchasers, whenever they were forced to sell their houses later on. The Building Societies and Insurance Companies were usually guarded against loss because they advanced only a part of the purchase price. The house-buyer, who had to sink his life-savings in finding the balance, was very apt to lose his money when he tried a few years later to sell at second-hand a house which he had bought when it was new.

There must be no return to these methods. The need after the war will be mainly for houses which can be *rented* at prices which ordinary workers can afford to pay ; and the only possible providers of such houses are the public authorities.

## A NATIONAL HOUSING CORPORATION

If most houses—and also schools, public buildings, factories in industrial estates and many other types of building—are likely to be erected after the war to the orders of public bodies, national or local, the State will be in a position to insist on the building industry being organised in such a way as to meet the public need for economy and efficiency, and for affording fair labour conditions. There ought, at the least, to be a stringent code of fair practice, applicable to the entire industry ; and no contract under public auspices or aided by public money should be given to any contractor who does not fully subscribe to this code. I should like to go a good deal further. All housing aided from public funds should be under the general supervision of a National Housing Corporation, with power to coordinate the policies of local authorities, and itself to take charge of major projects, such as the erection

of new towns and Industrial Estates. This Corporation could, of course, work largely through regional agencies on which the local authorities could be represented, and could delegate the control of local projects to local authorities in suitable cases. But it should have enough power to control prices and to make unified arrangements for the standardisation of supplies of essential builders' requisites ; and it should also be entrusted with the formulation of a new code of building by-laws in conformity with the requirements of modern technique.

### A NATIONAL BUILDING CORPORATION

Side by side with this body I should like to see a second—a National Building Corporation—formed, under public auspices, within the industry itself. Membership of this body should be open to existing, and to new, building firms, but only under stringent conditions. Each firm joining it should bind itself to observe thoroughly good labour conditions, including a guarantee of continuous employment, to make proper provision for the training of apprentices in accordance with a national apprenticeship scheme, to enter into common arrangements for purchase and standardisation of requisites and to submit to public inspection of its books and to an agreed system of costings and a limitation of profits in relation to costs. This done, firms belonging to the Corporation should be given preference in the assignment of public contracts. Finally, it should be made possible for the operatives themselves to create Building Guilds, and for these Guilds to become members of the Corporation.

The Building Guilds set up after the last war collapsed mainly owing to financial difficulties which fell upon them with the onset of the post-war slump. They had no capital, or none to speak of. Under the Addison Housing Scheme of 1919, they were able to carry on, because the State advanced money to them as the building proceeded ; but on the termination of this arrangement at the beginning of the slump, they were brought crashing to the ground. If new Building Guilds are to be brought into being, they must not be left to depend precariously on loans from capitalist sources, or on credit from private suppliers. The State must lend them the capital which they need, and the loans must not be suddenly withdrawn, as they were before. If the Guilds are created as full members of the proposed Building Corporation, accepting the obligations which membership involves, there is no reason why they should not, with Trade Union support, make a very large contribution to the better organisation of the industry and provide a valuable working model of labour self-government. But there must be no repetition of the attempt to carry on Building Guilds without any assured financial basis ; for such an attempt would only bring discredit on the movement for industrial democracy.

### PRIORITIES AND PLANNING

It will be a physical impossibility, for some time after the war, to build fast enough to meet even the really urgent needs. The training of the required force of skilled labour is bound to take time, however ambitiously we set about it ; and it will take at least two, and more probably three, years to get the industry organised on the scale needed for carrying out a satisfactory programme over a period of years. This time-factor, however, does not apply to works of Civil Engineering with anything like the same force ; for civil engineering works—roads, waterworks, and other projects of public construction—need a much smaller proportion of highly skilled labour, and can therefore be carried out with much less delay in face of a shortage of skilled workers. As against this, such projects take a long time to *plan* ; and it will not be practicable, though it will obviously be desirable, to put them into force on a large scale promptly at the end of the war unless the plans have been fully worked out

in advance. This, of course, applies in some measure to all plans of construction ; but it is of particular importance in the civil engineering field.

Let me now try to make a very tentative estimate of what we ought to attempt, beginning with house-building, which presents the largest problem. Very roughly, it takes a man a year to build an average working-class house. This means that, at the pre-war rate of 350,000 houses a year, the labour of about 350,000 operatives was required. Assume that this represents the normal annual post-war demand, apart from arrears of building and the making good of bomb damage. If the war lasts five years, the arrears, after allowing for such houses as have been built since 1939, will be at least 1,400,000 houses—the equivalent of four years' normal building. Add another 600,000 for making good war damage, and another 100,000 for improving rural housing standards. Add further what you think fit for the replanning and rebuilding of towns, so as to do away with congestion and with obsolete and insanitary dwellings. It is plain that nothing less than twice the rate of pre-war house-building over a period of years will avail to meet the need—the more so because we must allow for a lag of two or three years before the industry can be operating at full strength.

Before the war, work on repairs and maintenance accounted for about one-third of the value of all building work. Here again there will be heavy arrears to be made up. It is difficult to estimate the need in terms of manpower, because so much of it is done by small jobbing masters who do not appear in the register of insured operatives. There were at least 100,000 of these small masters in 1939 ; their numbers have been greatly reduced by the war, but they will probably resume operations on a big scale when it ends. Probably the number of men needed for normal repairs and maintenance is about 300,000 ; and to these must be added, for three years or so after the war, about another 150,000 to cope with accumulated arrears.

We have already a demand for well over a million men, without making any provision for industrial, educational or other kinds of new building, apart from houses. In face of these other demands, a total labour force of a million and a quarter, exclusive of civil engineering labour, cannot be enough. I should put the need at about a million and a half. Educational building alone will require about 150,000 men over ten years, if we are to carry through a reasonable plan of development ; and industrial building seems likely to need as many more—to say nothing of the demand for public buildings or of the special needs of agriculture for capital developments on a large scale.

Admittedly these figures are partly guesswork ; for it is outside the power of anyone except the Government to make the definite plans on which the demand for labour must depend. But the Government has made—or at any rate has made public—no plans at all, except its plan gradually to expand the building labour force to a maximum of a million and a quarter. In the natural order of things, it would have seemed more logical to settle first what is to be built, and then to reckon how many men will be needed. The reason why the task has been tackled upside down is that any decision about the nature of the post-war building programme is bound to involve decisions on much wider questions of policy—on the very questions which the Government is not prepared to raise for fear of stirring up controversy among its supporters.

The effects, however, of leaving these questions unraised are disastrous ; for it will mean disaster to enter the post-war emergency without any plans ready. Building work put in hand in a hurry, without careful advance planning, is bound to be badly done. The sorts of buildings we shall want—houses, schools, and everything else—depend on the sort of society we are setting out to create. That is why the Government has so far refused to give any inkling of its intentions. But these issues, controversial though they be, must be faced while the war is still going on, if there is to be any hope of our setting to work promptly to build a better Britain when it is over.

# THE CONDITIONS OF JUVENILE EMPLOYMENT

**A critical survey covering certain boys at a  
secondary school**

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The Children's and Young Persons' Act 1933 allows, subject to certain safeguards, that children who have attained the age of 12 years may be employed. Although the N.U.T. and the Council for Educational Advance some time ago advocated the prohibition of employment of all children below the school-leaving age, there has, as far as we know, been no critical survey of the conditions of employment of children still at school in order to discover whether they affected in any way the education of these children.

We have for some time felt that even under the provisions of the Children's and Young Persons' Act as amended by Bye Laws the employment of children still attending school was having harmful effects on the children themselves, and we welcomed the opportunity provided by the courtesy of the M.O.H. for Bournemouth, Dr. H. Gordon Smith, and the Headmaster of Bournemouth School, Mr. J. E. Parry, M.A., of studying in some detail the results of such employment on a small group of Bournemouth children. We publish this summary of our investigations in the hope that it may encourage others to conduct similar surveys in other districts, and thus prepare the way for what we believe are much needed reforms.

## CONDITIONS COVERING EMPLOYMENT OF SCHOOL CHILDREN

The child is required to obtain from the School Medical Officer a certificate 'that such employment will not be prejudicial to his health or physical development, and will not render him unfit to obtain proper benefit from his education (see para. 5a)'. The question arises whether the expression 'prejudicial to health' embraces mental and bodily health or whether the two expressions 'health' and 'physical development' are used synonymously. In either case we are of the opinion that the certificate of the School Medical Officer or his deputies alone is not sufficient to express an incontestable opinion about the effect of the child's employment upon his mental development in school. He knows nothing of the child's efforts and efficiency in the classroom. They may be endangered as a result of the employment; therefore such a certificate cannot do justice to the child. The physician is only competent to assess the actual state of health; he cannot give any definite assurance

that employment will not be prejudicial from the educational point of view. At the moment neither the child's classroom teachers nor those who supervise his physical education and recreation and who study his social welfare at school or in leisure have any say in the decision of the School Medical Officer; this indicates a need for closer cooperation between the Medical and Educational Authorities, since the latter are the only ones able eventually to decide, after knowing the Medical Officer's report on the health of the child, whether or not the proposed employment will really be in the interest of the child.

### THE EFFECT ON THE CHILD

We are convinced that many children are pushed by their parents or act on their own to find work before and/or after school in order to add to the family income. For many years before the War, nearly every country had a great number of unemployed. Too often the children were sharing their parents' anxieties about the future; they were brought up in a milieu which was all too frequently discussing unemployment, the dole and public assistance. This desire of the children to take up some work and to earn a few shillings a week is quite understandable, and from one point of view even laudable, but parents and society do not realise—or if they do they forget—that this employment entails an expenditure of energy and strength with which many children cannot cope. Children who come to school tired as a result of their early morning work, of a disturbed night due to unsatisfactory accommodation or to air raids are unable to profit as they showed from the instruction given to them in class. According to the judgment of many teachers, many of the children are inattentive, absent-minded, apathetic, negligent and even fall asleep in class. We do not wish to generalise further, but the fact is that these children cannot compete properly with the other scholars, even though those with whom they are graded in class are reputedly chosen as their academic equals. Some children realise in time that their physical powers are not sufficient or that their mental development is impeded, and therefore they voluntarily relinquish their employment—but many do not. Many employed children arrive at school late or not at all (especially on wet days). Their clothes are often soaked and their shoes need repairing. Before the War para. 9 of the Bye Laws stipulated that 'any person who employs a child in any work out of doors shall see that the child is provided during the course of his employment with boots and clothing sufficient to protect him from inclement weather'. With the introduction of coupons this regulation lost its validity. It would be an interesting side line to compile statistics of employed children who have been forced to miss their schooling from time to time owing to colds, insufficient clothing, undue fatigue, poor sleep, etc.

### SOME STATISTICS FROM BOURNEMOUTH

The number of children examined on applying for medical permits to take up employment amounts to some 11% or 12% of the 12-14 years age-range. In reality the percentage of children working is much higher since a large number of children work without applying for a permit, and are only discovered by accident when questioned at the annual School Medical Inspection. In the County Borough of Bournemouth during 1942, 435 children were examined; most of them attending elementary schools. It proved impossible to follow up adequately the mental development of all these cases, so we selected for investigation all boys attending Bournemouth Secondary School (a modern Secondary School of nearly 600 boys) who were or had been working before and/or after school hours during term-time. We agree

that the findings of investigating the 435 records would be more representative, but we suggest that they would not show a different conclusion.

Of the cases investigated we ruled out:

- (a) those who only engaged in work during the school holidays;
- (b) those who did a small amount of casual work on half-holidays only;
- (c) those whose parents employed them to 'help in the shop' (since it was often impossible to obtain reliable or consistent data, and in any case the employment was very irregular in time and quantity).

The remainder, some 30 in number, proved to be almost entirely newspaper boys—only three doing any other form of work.<sup>1</sup>

Of the 27 paper boys:

- 12 deliver only morning papers;
- 4 deliver only evening papers;
- 10 both morning and evening papers;
- 1 on Sundays only (against law).

Each boy was interviewed by one of us personally, and the answers to certain routine questions were tabulated as well as other data derived in conversation.

It is the practice at the moment that none of these boys, not being over 14, may undertake any form of juvenile employment without a permit which it is the responsibility of the employer to obtain from the Town Hall (Health Department) for each individual boy (see para. 8 of the Bye Laws). Thirteen of the boys, at the time of investigation, were under 14 and had no permit. One was under 12 and should therefore not have been working at all. Several of those now over 12 had worked before reaching the age of 12.

Boys over 14 do not require a permit, but those attending the secondary school hold their employment technically subject to the Headmaster's veto. This differentiation between the practice in elementary and secondary school is a regrettable fact because it shows that children who have not the opportunity of enjoying a higher education can ask for work without hindrance from the school. Apparently their efficiency in school is not considered of such importance as in a secondary school.

#### ANALYSIS OF CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

1. Age-range: 11y 3m to 15y 7 m. (N.B. Some boys gave details of their employment in successive years. Each year's record was connoted as a separate 'case'. Thus, although only 30 boys were concerned, there were 52 'cases').

Details of age-groups:

11-year group ..	..	..	3 cases (under age)
12-year group ..	..	..	16 cases
13-year group ..	..	..	21 cases
14-year group ..	..	..	10 cases
15-year group ..	..	..	2 cases
			52 cases

<sup>1</sup> 1 grocery delivery; 1 chemist delivery; 1 beer delivery.

## 2. Hours of employment:

## (a) Hours of rising, bed-time and length of sleep:

The hours of rising varied from 5.45 a.m. to 7.30 a.m., and showed a median time of 6.45 a.m.

Bed-times varied rather more widely: the median being about 9 p.m. to 9.15 p.m. and the extremes 7.30 p.m. to 9.45 p.m.

Length of sleep varied from  $8\frac{1}{2}$  hours to  $11\frac{1}{2}$  hours: the median length being  $9\frac{1}{2}$  hours.

## (b) Actual time taken in delivery:

It was difficult to make an accurate survey of this, as there are so many factors to be taken into account. The late arrival of papers owing to wartime transport difficulties made late starts the rule, and the time taken varied considerably with the weather. Basing our calculations on the number of papers delivered and the boy's statement of the time it took him 'as a rule' we found that the median time for delivery was about 45 minutes to an hour and the median number of papers delivered in these median times 43 to 48.

Although, according to para. 7 of the Bye Laws, no boy may be employed on Sunday except in the delivery of milk, two boys were doing a Sunday round, and delivered 70 and 250 papers respectively in 2 and  $4\frac{1}{2}$  hours—averaging 35 to the hour in the first case and 55 in the second. It is interesting to note that, although there was no incentive to speed in these cases, as there would be in the case of a boy rushing to get done in time for school, the delivery of 55 papers in an hour is greater than the median number for the week.

## (c) Times available for breakfast:

Of the 23 boys who delivered in the mornings:

7 had breakfast *before* their delivery;

10 had it *after*;

6 had 'something' (e.g. cocoa) before and the rest after.

## (d) Effect on the boy (as regards time):

Of the 23 early morning deliveries:

7 admitted that a rush was entailed;

3 had given up for some other reasons (e.g. cold weather);

13 denied any effect.

## 3. Scholarship Boys:

Although only 41% of the total on roll at the time of investigation were scholarship holders, 24 (i.e. 80%) of the 30 boys concerned in deliveries of any kind were scholarship boys. Of these 30:

8 were in 'A' forms;

14 were in 'B' or 'C' forms;

8 were in 'D' forms.

Boys in 'A' forms being of the highest academic quality and in 'D' definitely inferior to the others, although the four streams are parallel.

At first sight this seems a normal distribution, but an examination of the placings of all the scholarship boys throughout the school at the time of our investigation showed that 42% were in 'A' forms, 45% in 'B' and 'C' forms, and 13% in 'D' forms, while of our working boys there were 26.6% in 'A' forms, 46.8% in 'B' and 'C' forms, and 26.6% in 'D' forms, which shows (a) a considerably smaller percentage of scholarship boys than might have been expected in 'A' forms and (b) a considerably higher percentage than normal of boys in 'D' forms.

It may assist our examination of individual cases if we take them in three groups:

- (a) 11 boys are recorded by the staff as doing well in their school work. Seven are in 'A' forms and four in 'B' and 'C' forms. These are recorded by the staff as doing work of a good standard and as having improved—or at least not deteriorated—and of showing no signs of lassitude, listlessness or other observable indications of interference with school work by any outside agency. Examination of their reports, marks and records from time to time fails to show any correlation between employment and lack of progress.
- (b) Going to the other end of the scale, we find 11 boys are making unsatisfactory or no progress—all in 'C' or 'D' forms.
- (c) The remaining group consists of eight boys—those who do not appear at first sight to be other than indefinitely affected.

### CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Although the number of observed cases is small, we are able to draw a few conclusions. The fact that 24 scholarship boys were doing some kind of work shows that either something must be wrong with the home circumstances to warrant it, or else the parents and children did not realise that the school work might be affected. It was very difficult to find out how far the economic conditions during wartime were the cause of employment. At any rate the result of their employment is that 11 boys showed a very low efficiency in their school work. Seven out of these 11 had won scholarships from Junior Schools at the age of 11.<sup>1</sup> It is easy and reasonable to infer that the effect of employment on the educational standard of elementary school boys must be still worse than is shown in our survey, since only the brightest boys from the elementary schools win scholarships.

We have only spoken of boys because we have not had any opportunity of questioning any secondary school girls. The proportion of girls attending elementary schools who are employed is about 10% of the total number.

We should suggest that it might be profitable for Head Teachers and Headmasters to pool their experiences of the mental development of children employed whilst at school, and discuss them exhaustively. The more this question is investigated, the more obvious it will become, we feel, that no child under 14 should be allowed to be employed. We are firmly of the opinion that children below school leaving age should not be considered fit to augment the family income. It is far more in the interest of the State and of everybody concerned that they should give their whole energy to their school work.

Of these 30 boys who were employed, 19 were classified at the School Medical Inspection as 'C'—'slightly subnormal' in nutrition. We have drawn attention already to the times available for these boys to have their breakfast. It is probable that the effort these boys display for this kind of work will harm them in the long run much more than they realise in the first flush of their enthusiasm. We venture to suggest that, where necessary, the Education Authorities should give maintenance grants and so avoid the necessity of the children working while still at school.

As long as teachers and doctors do not collaborate very closely and discuss their common problems together, their task of educating the people and improving the health of the nation is made more difficult. This cooperation between Medical Officers of Health and the teachers is important for the full development and maintenance of the children's mental and physical capacity.

<sup>1</sup> A later enquiry among boys and girls of five elementary schools showed that out of a total of 281 employed children 30% were in forms 'A', 31% in forms 'B' and 39% in forms 'C'.

Finally, we should like to discuss two points: As yet the employer notifies the Authority of the employment of a child—in theory; but it happens very often that children are found working without permission because the employer has not carried out his obligation to see that the permit is obtained. Excuses given by employers appeared very weak: such, for example, as that there have been so many changes in the boys employed that the employer was tired of applying for fresh permits! We suggest that some form of Juvenile Employment Exchange should operate so that no child will seek employment directly. The parents would register the child with the Authority; the Medical Officer and the Head Teacher would give a certificate according to para. 5a of the Bye Laws, and the child would be allocated to a job near his home.

The other question concerns the wages that children receive. There is no definite agreement as to the amount to be paid and the differences are sometimes quite considerable. At the outbreak of War a charge of 1d per week was standard for delivery of newspapers. Since June 1942 it has become the practice to charge 1d for morning and 1d for evening papers—but *no increase in the wages of paper boys has been made* in the majority of cases. In some cases the child does not even receive a wage amounting to 1d per week per paper delivered. This should at least be regarded as the minimum, and we feel that it may not be too extravagant a suggestion that a committee might be formed to safeguard the interests of boys and girls engaged in delivering papers.

## SELECT PAMPHLET GUIDE

(From pamphlets received)

### GENERAL

*The Equal Citizenship (Blanket) Bill*: D. Evans (Women's Publicity Planning Association), 1/6. *Q Camp: An Epitome of Experiences at Hawkspur Camp*: (Howard League for Penal Reform), 1/6. *The Communal Restaurant*: (London Council of Social Service), 6d. *Hot Springs and Humanity*: F. Le Gros Clark (Discovery), 2d. *Communism: The Story of the C.P.*: G. A. Aldred (Strickland Press), 1/6. *Fire Guards: New Orders Explained*: (L.R.D.), 4d. *Forward—by the Right*: Tory Reform Committee. SPGB Library: *Socialism* (4d.); *The Socialist Party* (3d.); *Should Socialists Support Federal Union* (4d.); *Questions of the Day* (8d.). *Personnel Management in Relation to Factory Organisation*: L. Urwick (Institute of Labour Management), 1/-. National Peace Council: No. 20, *The Renewal of Civilisation*, Christopher Dawson (4d.); No. 21, *Planning for Abundance* (1/-); No. 22, *London Washington Moscow*, H. J. Laski (6d.).

### RECONSTRUCTION

*The White Paper on Educational Reconstruction*: (Council for Educational Advance), 1d. *The Open Door in Secondary Education*: Nuffield College (O.U.P.), 6d. *Education (Part 2)*: (Staples Digest), 2/-. *Education after the War*: (N.U.W.T.), 6d. *The Public Schools*: (W.E.A.), 6d. *Design for Britain Series*: No. 21, *Cooperative Home Building*, W. P. Watkins; No. 24, *New Towns for Old*, S. D. Adshead; No. 25, *The Small House*, M. Fitzgerald; No. 31, *Public Health and Social Conditions*, Charles Porter (Dent), 6d. each. *New Plans for International Trade*: Oxford Institute of Statistics (Blackwell), 1/6. *The Problem of Full Employment*: Study Outline (W.E.A.), 4d.

### INTERNATIONAL

*The Future of Austria*: J. Braunthal (V. Gollancz), 1/-. *Poland and Russia*: Dr. J. Weyers, 2/6. *30 Questions about Belgium*: (Belgium Information Office). *Commonsense versus Vandittartism*: Douglas Brown (T.L.P.), 3d.

# FULL EMPLOYMENT AND MONOPOLY<sup>1</sup>

## Allan Flanders

There is very little with which I disagree in the valuable memorandum by G. D. N. Worswick on "Economic Strategy of the Transition to Socialism" in your last issue. But he does not take his argument far enough with the consequence that the policy he advocates is rather dangerously inadequate.

Agreed: the main cause of mass unemployment is to be found in the poverty of the masses, that is in the gross inequality in the distribution of income. Agreed: a socialist policy for full employment should be characterised, amongst other things, by its emphasis upon increased consumption. But Worswick appears to believe that income distribution can only be altered by Budgetary measures in the 'transition to socialism' period. The reduction of indirect taxation is his main proposal. An important socialist demand, but surely there are other measures of greater structural significance by which the real incomes of the workers can be increased whilst those of the capitalists are reduced.

Worswick is, I believe, like myself a great admirer of the work of Michal Kalecki. One of the important theoretical conclusions established by Kalecki (see his *Essays in the Theory of Economic Fluctuations*) is that the distribution of the national income is largely determined by the average degree of monopoly which prevails in the economy; or, if we consider one particular commodity, the amount of the price paid out in wages depends on the degree of monopoly in the various stages of its production and distribution. This theoretical concept of 'degree of monopoly' effects a measurement not only of the consequences of organised buying or selling monopolies but also of the imperfections of the market, the other obstacles to perfect competition. It is based on a practical recognition that neither perfect competition nor perfect monopoly ever exist, there being a continuous gradation between them. It is not my purpose to enter into the problems of economic theory. The important thing for socialists to recognise is that the distribution of income can be altered by measures which reduce or increase the degree of monopoly prevailing in the different industries.

What is monopoly in its various forms but the ultimate cause of economic exploitation? Monopoly exists wherever a class or group of individuals have at their sole disposal certain goods or opportunities so that they are able if they have a mind to exclude others who need those goods and opportunities from their use. So it is with the land monopoly, or with the capitalists' monopoly in the ownership of means of production and their consequent buying monopoly on the labour market. So it is with the multitudinous forms of selling monopoly, or with the class monopoly in educational and social opportunities which also influences the distribution of income. Monopoly always involves the creation of a state of dependency which can be exploited for private advantage. It is therefore always a form of organised robbery carried out by the use of economic power, although this power relies for its existence on political sanctions or political consent.

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<sup>1</sup> A Note on *The Economic Strategy of the Transition to Socialism* by G. D. N. Worswick in October, 1943, issue of the *Quarterly*.

Measures to combat monopoly are a necessary part of the means for securing full employment by maximum consumption. And it is as well for socialists to recognise with Herbert Morrison that nationalisation is not the only—and in some industries not even the most desirable way of eliminating private monopoly. This is a subject in itself, but I agree with Morrison that:

‘ . . . this might be done—by legal changes, by careful public supervision, and by fiscal policies which encourage enterprise. It is, however, beyond doubt that in many instances public action in far more positive forms will be needed. This may sometimes take the form of direct, un-subsidised competition by those Government plants with which the end of the war will leave us so plentifully provided. But in other instances I am convinced that the only answer consistent with national wellbeing is full and effective public control.’

The main point is that it is high time that we in the socialist movement worked out such an anti-monopoly policy in far greater detail. Unfortunately it is not so long ago when some socialists were welcoming the Government’s promotion of the development towards more strongly organised monopoly, either because they considered this development inevitable or because they thought it desirable on the grounds that the creation of ever larger units of industrial organisation would facilitate or even compel the taking over of the industry by the State. That attitude has not disappeared and there would seem to be a need for theoretical revision as well as a change in policy.

There is one further point, bearing on the ways in which the present distribution of income can be altered, which Worswick leaves out of account. It is true that the capitalists emphasise increased investment as their means of increasing employment, and that the increase in the production of production goods which would thus result would not have a healthy economic basis if mass purchasing power and the demand for consumption goods did not rise proportionately. But need it be assumed that investment must only increase the supply of production goods and thus productive capacity? I am not referring to the fact that as a result of such investment more wages are paid out to the workers in those industries, because we know from experience that although that does spread the boom over most industries eventually such a boom collapses. What I have in mind is that a programme of public investment can be deliberately designed so as to cheapen certain consumption goods and otherwise lower the cost of living, providing always that it is accompanied by measures to eliminate private monopoly. Investment, for example, undertaken to increase the fertility of the soil and improve the methods of agricultural production in this country—and how necessary that is—would help to provide cheaper food, providing the landlords were not allowed to reap the benefit by pushing up their rents. Public investment directed towards creating an abundant supply of good houses at reasonable rents for the workers would lower rents all round, providing the suppliers of building materials were not organised in rings or dominated by combines and able to exploit the boom by demanding higher prices for the commodities they sell. ‘Full employment through cheaper food and lower rents’ would make an excellent slogan for a socialist economic policy. But investment in transport and investment to encourage a form of utility production in clothes and furniture after the war could all be a means of lowering the cost of living and releasing purchasing power for other consumption goods. The importance of a ‘cheap money’ policy in this connection hardly needs emphasis.

Increased investment and increased consumption are not alternatives. Our ‘transition’ aim should be: Public investment to increase consumption. But—let me repeat—the condition for its fulfilment is the attack upon monopoly.

# BOOK REVIEWS

## Industrial Reconstruction

**REGIONAL PLANNING An Outline of the Scientific Data relating to Planning in Great Britain** by L. B. Escritt (George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. 12/6)

This is an excellent, authoritative book. Its compendious proportions—and not least, the modesty of its author—disguise the immense amount of useful and suggestive information it contains. By profession the author is a municipal engineer; by taste he seems to be a geographer and geologist. But professional experience and personal inclination both serve to illustrate the fact which the recent literature of planning is showing so clearly; namely that the cities, towns and villages of the future are not going to be just matters of 'architecture', but of scientific research, public health and general living amenities.

The title of the book is a misnomer. Its contents can best be judged from the sub-title and from the headings of its chapters, the Study of the Soil, Land Drainage, Water Supply, Sewerage, Location and Size of Towns, and so forth. It is written primarily for the student and for the author's professional colleagues; but it is eminently readable, and there is no reason why its technical and sometimes controversial flavour should discourage any reader who wants a survey of some of our post-war planning problems in the widest scientific sense.

F. P. C.

**ECONOMIC RECONSTRUCTION** Vol. I by J. R. Bellerby (Macmillan 21/-)

Economic Reconstruction in this book has only one end: achieving 100 per cent. full employment, whatever the price in efficiency and flexibility. More analysis of the problem and closer assessment of the social cost of proposed remedies might have recommended wider objectives and more qualified prescriptions. For instance, the danger to consumers arising from control arrangements is set aside: 'Above all, it is suggested, the price-fixing scheme (of any industry in the future) should be operated through individuals who are the industry's own choice'. What sort of reconstruction is this?

P. C.

**MONOPOLY** by E. A. G. Robinson (Nisbet and Cambridge University Press 7/6 net)

This is the latest of the Cambridge Economic Handbooks, still the best set of introductions to orthodox economics available. The first half of the book lists the types of monopoly, the methods by which monopolies are established and maintained, and their effects on efficiency and stability. The second half deals with their control, and includes separate chapters on U.S., Germany and Great Britain. This factual data probably compensates for the indecisiveness of the author's own conclusions. For Mr. Robinson leaves his reader to judge.

R. C. T.

**INDUSTRY AFTER THE WAR** by Charles Madge (Pilot Press 3/6)

The first of the 'Target for Tomorrow' Series, designed to popularise discussion on post-war planning. Foreword by Sir William Beveridge; photos (some relevant, most picturesque); isotypes and slabs of quotation from the proposals of the F B I, the 120 industrialists, Lever Bros, Courtauld, as well as various sections of the Labour movement, articles and letters in 'The Times', 'The Economist', etc.

A. A.

**FUTURE EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR BRITISH INDUSTRY**

by Tudor J. Jones (Harrap 5/-)

Proposals for education for industry based on a rather mystic religious and guild organisation. Helped out with general remarks about planning, charts showing the progress of the child's mental and spiritual development and quotations from the Pope, Rabindranath Tagore, and the Atlantic Charter.

A. A.

## Home Affairs

**SOCIAL STUDIES IN WORLD CITIZENSHIP** by L. J. F. Brimble and F. J. May (Macmillan 6/-)

**TOWARDS A NEW ARISTOCRACY** by F. C. Happold (Lindsay Drummond 5/-)

Two shortish books on educational topics. The first discusses the practical possibilities of education for world citizenship in schools; and after three introductory chapters suggests how various subjects could be taught so as to further that end. The treatment is not very well balanced; history receives far too little attention, Esperanto too much; and not all the difficulties are faced. But the intention is practical, and teachers should find some useful hints.

The contribution of the headmaster of Bishop Wordsworth's School at Salisbury is to be heartily recommended. It opens with a penetrating diagnosis of the social problem of today and its educational significance, goes on to describe the author's own very interesting experiments in education, and finishes with suggestions for the future. It is vigorously and interestingly written, and though many will disagree with it in parts it comes nearer than anything I have yet seen to facing the problem of higher education in the modern world in a realistic manner. It should be read by all educationalists. M. I. C.

**COMMODITY CONTROL (with Supplement)** (Butterworth 15/-)

This book provides an admirable guide to the emergency legislation imposing control of the manufacture or supply of commodities excluding food. It has thirteen sections which cover such varying topics as the creation and functions of wartime Ministries to the control of employment and the concentration of production. An indispensable reference for present-day administrators.

R. D.

**MONEY AND THE CITIZEN** by W. Hedley Robinson (Duckworth 8/6)

The author traces the evolution of banking through the ages: he writes of the primitive methods of barter—he tells of the Lombards and the Goldsmiths, he relates the story of the Bank of England and he gives an admirably lucid account of the ramifications of the money market of today. This is not a book for the advanced student but those who are mystified by such things as the Gold Standard and the Exchange Equalisation Account may well find that the author has rendered these mysteries more intelligible. L. W. W.

**BIRTH, POVERTY AND WEALTH** by Richard M. Titmuss (Hamish Hamilton 7/6)

By ingenious manipulation of vital statistics the author of 'Parents' Revolt' reaches some formidable conclusions, e.g., that this century's great material advances have widened, not lessened, the gap between rich and poor as reflected in that sensitive index, infant mortality. This thoughtful study, however persuasive and readable, will not allay the average citizen's suspicion of the validity of statistics, but it demands attention from all interested in contemporary trends. B. C. T.

**THE REFORM OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES** by Sir A. S. MacNalty (Oxford University Press 2/6)

In this Nuffield College issue, a former Chief Medical Officer of the Ministry of Health brings his great experience to bear on the vexed topical problem of medical planning. He cautiously supports Beveridge's Assumption B but hastens to perpetuate the voluntary hospital system and National Health Insurance. His conclusions favour administration by local authorities, co-operating through Regional Health Councils and centrally directed by a Minister with longer and more secure tenure than at present, or preferably a department with a 'non-political head' (though he doubts the possibility of this). As part of a rearguard action against the Labour Party and similar socialistic plans, this pamphlet will undoubtedly come into use should the bolder reactionary front fall back from its advance positions. B. C. T.

**ALTERNATIVE TO DEATH** by the Earl of Portsmouth (Faber & Faber 8/6)

Propaganda for golden age of integrated, enlightened, conscientious landlords holding land from 'the Sovereign', when population decimated by industrial over-specialisation and chemical farming. Not a book for those who wish reassurance that their pigeon-hole, parasitic existence is the good life.

O.P.

**MAINLY FOR MEN** by Ethel M. Wood (Gollancz 3/-)

A booklet written at the request of the Committee on Woman Power, on the theme that the spirit of the Sex Disqualification Removal Act of 1919 has not been implemented. Contains a number of facts on the disabilities of women in various types of occupations, but is sketchy and disproportionate in its treatment. It is worth looking at; but more work on the subject is urgently required.

M. I. C.

**THE SIZE AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF A TOWN** (Allen & Unwin 1/-)

*This Report by a Survey Group of the National Council of Social Service* is based on experience gained and, what is more, digested, in the forlorn attempt made to build up community life in the housing estates set up in the inter-war period. The arguments and recommendations set out most clearly that towns must be constructed from the start as communities, and that communal facilities cannot just be grafted on as an afterthought. The pamphlet contains a useful appendix on 'What is a Community Association?'

O. G.

### International and Colonial

**CANADA IN WORLD AFFAIRS: THE PREWAR YEARS** By F. H. Soward, J. F. Parkinson, N. A. M. Mackenzie, and T. W. L. MacDermot (Oxford University Press 12/6)

Studies in Canada's international relationships—political, economic and diplomatic—during the years 1935–39, prepared under the auspices of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs. Useful for the research student of Dominion problems, but rather too detailed and documented for anyone else. J. F. H.

**WEALTH FOR WELFARE** By H. W. Foster and E. V. Bacon. (Macmillan 12/6)

An absorbingly interesting plea for 'a concerted attack upon the poverty of the world' by means of a 'wide and organised development of the world's resources'; Britain to set the pace by creating an Imperial Development Authority, and thus by cooperation with other States in regional councils and commissions, lay the foundations of a World Authority. The authors' case is not argued from generalisations, but is based on 'close-up' studies of particular colonies and countries—British Honduras, Kenya, Burma, &c.—and of the precise kind of development needed to raise the standard of life of their inhabitants and give them a definite place in world economy. J. F. H.

**ARGUMENT OF EMPIRE** By W. K. Hancock (Penguin Special 9d.)

This little book reminds one of nothing so much as those hearty, breezy talks on Christianity which B.C. chaplains frequently give us. There is the same mainly readiness to admit a fault here or there, the same facility in skirting dangerous corners and, above all, the same robust faith in everything working together for good in the best-to-be of all possible empires. Presumably intended for the conversion (or appeasement) of American unbelievers. J. F. H.

BOOK REVIEWS—International and Colonial—*continued*.

**THE JAPANESE NEW ORDER IN ASIA** by Paul Einzig (Macmillan 10/6)

Dr. Einzig has deserted his chosen ground of European Finance for the Far East with not too happy results. He is too much a European and therefore tends to exaggerate the extent to which Japan has borrowed ideas from Germany. Her grandiose plans are all her own and have been slowly maturing for well over half a century. The chapters on finance are excellent, as is to be expected. Dr. Einzig, like nearly everyone else, probably exaggerates Japan's shipping difficulties.

M. O.

**INDIAN POLITICS 1936-1942** Report on the Constitutional Problems in India Part II by Prof. R. Coupland (O.U.P. 7/6)

An invaluable survey, both factual and interpretive. Yet the stress laid on the alleged 'totalitarianism' of Congress and the 'dictatorship' of Gandhi is misleading. Exclusive one-Party Government may be injudicious or inexpedient, but so long as minorities exercise the right of expression and propaganda wherein lies the 'totalitarianism'?

Gandhi's influence was, and is, undoubtedly immense, but any 'dictatorial' translation of this must be off-set by the fact that his pacifist technique was rejected by the Working Committee and that he accepted the decision.

Professor Coupland bears cautious tribute to the competence and beneficial legislation of Provincial Governments and emphasises the basic problem of gross poverty.

R. S.

**SUBJECT INDIA** by H. N. Brailsford (Gollancz 6/-)

A sensitive, socialist pocket analysis of the Indian 'Problem and Solution' (Part I) together with a reprint of chapters from the author's earlier 'Rebel India' (Part II).

He contends that the offer of the Cripps Mission avoided some previous pitfalls and was a partial advance but failed largely because the Princes remained 'in a position to serve the Empire by a formidable process of blackmail'. Further, 'the break came at the end because they (the Congress Working Committee) felt that the Viceroy's Council which they were asked to enter would not be in any true sense a National Government'.

The political issue is related to Indian economic conditions and resources in an illuminating impressive chapter on 'Why India is Poor'.

R. S.

**BEGGAR MY NEIGHBOUR** by Lionel Fielden (Secker & Warburg 3/6)

A highly personal, somewhat discursive, but always readable discussion of the situation in India by the ex-controller of broadcasting in that country. Mr Fielden offers no 'solutions', but is content to state, in human rather than statistical terms, the point of view of Indians; and to insist that any case for the perpetuation of British rule in India falls to the ground 'with all the bigger thud because the old excuses of "after the war", "presently", "when Indians have decided on a constitution", have now worn so thin that you can see right through them'.

J. F. H.

